UCLA Faculty Association

News and opinion from Dan Mitchell since 2009

Sunday, June 30, 2024

State Budget: We always ask nicely and say thank you



University of California President Michael V. Drake, M.D., issued the following statement today (Saturday, June 29, 2024) on California's 2024-25 budget:

"This is a challenging budget year for California, and we appreciate the way in which Governor Newsom and the Legislature have navigated tough decisions. At the University of California, we are grateful for the steadfast support of the Governor and the Legislature for UC students.

We will continue to work hard to achieve our shared objectives with the state, focusing on expanding opportunities for students, finding new ways to support them in their studies, and building inroads to an ever more diverse faculty. We will work with the Governor and the Legislature to ensure that we continue to strive for these objectives in future years.

An investment in the University of California is an investment in California's economic growth, socioeconomic mobility, and innovative research to meet the world's growing challenges."

The Council of UC Faculty Associations

- FAQs for Senate Faculty about Possible Strike by UAW May 2024
- CUCFA Statement On Campus Protests
- We Support BOARS Math Requirements Recommendation
- Support AB-2349 – The Cal-Bridge Program
- Drop the Charges Against January Regents' Meeting Protestors

Remaking the University

- The Authoritarian Personality Comes to College - 5/2/2024
- The New McCarthyism Intensifies - 4/30/2024
- THE STRIKE - 12/6/2022

Higher Ed. News & Commentary

- Chronicle of Higher Education
- Inside Higher Education
- Remaking the University
- Changing Universities
- California Professor

Search This Blog

Source: https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/university-california-statement-californias-2024-25-budget.

We always ask nicely and say thank you: [click on link below]



Or direct to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_oJBloLMZ6M at minute 3:09.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 9:02 AM No comments:  

Labels: Drake, State Budget, UC budget crisis

Medicare Advantage Scrutiny Continues



As we have noted in the past, Medicare Advantage plans - under which private insurers are paid by Medicare to provide benefits that traditional government-operated Medicare does, have grown to the point where a majority of Medicare recipients are under the privatized plans.

Employers that offer retiree health benefits, such as UC, now sometimes offer only Medicare Advantage - as UC at one point wanted to do - or offer it as a low-cost option along with traditional Medicare wrap-around plans - as UC does.

It appears that the private providers of Medicare Advantage were overpaid on a risk-adjusted basis, making it attractive to expand into the Medicare market, advertising on TV, and offering

Search

UC Faculty Associations

- UCLA Faculty Association
- UCSB Faculty Association
- UCSC Faculty Association
- UCB Faculty Association
- Council of UC Faculty Associations

Other Faculty Organizations

- American Association of University Professors
- California Faculty Association (NEA)
- UC-AFT

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features such as gym memberships not typically provided by traditional Medicare wrap-around plans. While these features are attractive, the question remains as to what happens when patients are seriously ill. Are they being denied benefits that traditional Medicare would have provided? The impression that all is not well with Medicare Advantage is beginning to create resistance in Congress and demands for more regulation.*

And there is this report from Stat News: *A bipartisan group of lawmakers is urging the Biden administration to prohibit Medicare Advantage insurers from using artificial intelligence tools to deny care until it completes a systematic review of their accuracy and effects on patients. In a letter sent Tuesday, the lawmakers cited a STAT investigation in calling on the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to beef up oversight of AI and algorithmic tools that discriminate against old and sick patients...*

*The letter comes after a STAT investigation in 2023 found that Medicare Advantage insurers were using an AI tool to cut off care to patients struggling to recover from grave illnesses and injuries such as cancer, severe strokes, and amputations. The investigation found that the owner of the algorithm, **UnitedHealth Group**, pressured its own clinicians to cut off rehabilitative care for patients within 1% of the days projected by an algorithm...*

***UnitedHealth** and its subsidiary, NaviHealth, are facing a class-action lawsuit stemming from their use of the algorithm to deny care, as is Humana, another large Medicare Advantage insurer that has used the UnitedHealth-owned algorithm. Meanwhile, **UnitedHealth** has eliminated the NaviHealth name and rebranded the company as Optum Home & Community Care.*

*[Congressional members] also proposed a two-week grace period before an insurer can reissue a denial after an initial denial has been overturned on appeal. STAT's investigation found that **UnitedHealth Group** was instructing its frontline clinical staff to immediately issue new denials to patients after they won appeals, resulting in a near-constant battle over coverage for severely ill family members...*

Full story at: https://www.statnews.com/2024/06/25/medicare-advantage-ai-tools-denial-unitedhealth-lawmawkers-cms/.

A **UnitedHealth** Medicare Advantage plan is an option being offered by UC.** Just taking note of that...

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It goes without saying - but I'll say it anyway - that what ultimately happens to Medicare Advantage, and Medicare more generally, is going to be determined - along with a whole lot of other things - by the upcoming election in November. The recent debate was a reminder.

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*A major New York City municipal union recently has pulled back its support for Medicare Advantage for its retirees. See https://gothamist.com/news/key-union-pulls-support-for-moving-

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**https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/retirees/retiree-benefits/retiree-health/medical-plans-for-retirees/uc-medicare-choice/.


Los Angeles Times

LATEXTRA

Biden stumbles, Trump pounces

President, challenger trade accusations on immigration, abortion in debate

Verbal struggles, name-calling and other exchanges

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:00 AM No comments:  

Labels: health care, uc retirement

Saturday, June 29, 2024

UC Strike Derails Labor Bill



From Politico: *Fallout over the war in Gaza derailed a top priority for an influential California labor group Wednesday when a measure to provide unemployment insurance benefits to striking workers stalled over legislators' objections to pro-Palestinian campus strikes.*

The bill died after an emotionally-charged hearing in the Assembly Insurance Committee. During the hearing several members decried the California Labor Federation's support for academic workers across the University of

California system who recently walked out to protest the arrests of pro-Palestinian demonstrators on campuses.

The strikes roiled campuses from Santa Cruz to Davis, and lawmakers on Wednesday raised concerns about reports of antisemitism at the protests while questioning the legitimacy of the work stoppage. "I no longer understand if we have a shared understanding of what a strike is," Orinda Democrat Rebecca Bauer-Kahan said, tearing up as she recounted her grandparents' experience in the Holocaust. "They're marching across our beautiful UC campuses, yelling 'Kill one more' in reference to the Jews."

Labor law limits strikes to issues including wages, working conditions and employers' "unfair labor practices." The workers argued the UC's handling of student protests, including arrests and suspensions of demonstrators, amounted to several unfair labor practices that justified a walkout. The conflict over the bill marks the latest example of how the war has fractured the base of the Democratic party — this time, it's typically pro-labor Democrats expressing profound alienation over union actions.

A similar version of the bill, authored by state Sen. Anthony Portantino, easily passed the Legislature last year, buoyed by the momentum of the "Hot Labor Summer" of large-scale, union actions. It was then vetoed by Gov. Gavin Newsom. "The strike has nothing to do with working conditions, but it was sanctioned by the Labor Fed," said Marc Berman, a Democrat from Menlo Park. "That is what gives me and my colleagues, who voted for this bill last year, an immense amount of heartburn and heartache."

The 48,000-member United Auto Workers Local 4811, which includes classroom employees and researchers, has argued the arrests and UC's delayed response to a violent counter-protest on the Los Angeles campus constituted an unfair labor practice. The university, meanwhile, argued the work stoppages were a political protest of the war in Gaza, and that they breached no-strike clauses in the union's contracts. Employees returned to work earlier this month after a state court blocked the strikes at the urging of the UC.

Labor Federation head Lorena Gonzalez said the bill's failure "only punishes grocery workers, janitors, hotel housekeepers, and other workers on strike demanding a better life for themselves or their families." As for the controversial strikes by the UC student workers' union, UAW Local 4811, Gonzalez said the Labor Fed has "a responsibility to support union members" and her group authorized the walkout unanimously. She noted that UAW condemned antisemitism and it was not their members that made the hateful comments.

Lawmakers in the Legislature's Jewish Caucus have grown increasingly concerned in recent weeks about what they argue is an effort in the labor movement to advance an extreme anti-Israel agenda. "It turns out that marching through UC Davis calling for the death of Jews and calling to kill another 100 Jews is not a good way to win votes in the Jewish Caucus," said one member, who was granted anonymity to discuss sensitive conversations.

Jewish Caucus co-chair, Democratic state Sen. Scott Wiener, told reporters the group has not taken a position on the legislation. He said he respected individual members' votes in the Insurance Committee, but pointed out that he voted for the bill in his chamber.

The bill failed to pass the committee with two Republicans voting no and five Democrats not voting.

Source: https://www.politico.com/news/2024/06/27/california-lawmakers-reject-benefits-for-striking-workers-over-gaza-protests-00165264.

As we noted yesterday, there is a difference in the skill set involved in organizing a union and then managing the resulting organization. The latter, among other things, involves thinking through the externalities on allies of particular actions.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:00 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, politics, strikes, UC

Friday, June 28, 2024

Is there a compact?



Yours truly looked at the basic budget bill SB 108 passed yesterday and sent to the governor. (There are several bills that are part of the budget process.) Comparing the basic allocation in that bill with what the governor proposed in his May Revise indicates that the legislature provided a 5%-ish increase for UC to just under $4.9 billion.

So there is a paradox. The multiyear UC compact with the *governor* provided a basic 5% increase - which the governor proposed to eliminate. But it is the *legislature* - with which there is no compact - that ultimately provided the increment.

In summary, the governor felt free to violate his own deal. The legislature imposed it back on him. Of course, he could use his line-item veto in theory to reduce the increment, but that seems unlikely since in recent years the governor and the Democratic leaders make a deal which is then signed unchanged.

So, is there a compact if the governor feels free to change it whenever dark budget clouds appear? Just asking...

Posted by California Policy Issues at 8:30 AM No comments:

Labels: governor, legislature, politics, State Budget, UC budget crisis

(Suspended) Strike News - Addendum

Watch the Regents Meeting of May 16, 2024

- ► May (87)
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Contributors

- California Policy Issues
- Toby Higbie
- UCLA Faculty Association



Yesterday, we posted about an offer by a UAW local that seemed to be off-script at Santa Cruz and a court hearing regarding the suspended student-worker strike. It appears from a statement tweeted and issued by UC labor relations that a) the hearing was cancelled because the strike officially ended yesterday, and b) UC is continuing to pursue its lawsuit against the union for breach of contract, i.e., striking while under a no-strike clause.*

This posting seems to be part of the new "professionalism" in UC labor relations policy about which we have also previously posted.** See below for yesterday's notice by UC:

UAW strike formally ends; breach of contract case will continue in Superior Court

UC Office of the President June 27, 2024

The International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW) agreed to extend the temporary restraining order that ended the strike that began last month. The University of California's breach of contract case against UAW is ongoing.

Strike Officially Over: Both parties agreed to extend a temporary restraining order (TRO) through June 30. Since UAW had only authorized the strike through June 30, this extension signifies a formal end to the strike. In light of this agreement, the hearing on the preliminary injunction that was previously scheduled for June 27 is no longer necessary.

Contract Dispute Continues: The underlying lawsuit regarding the breach of contract will proceed in Superior Court. The next hearing on the case will be on Nov. 8.

Unfair Labor Practice Charges Under Review: Separate unfair labor practice (ULP) charges filed by both the University and the UAW related to activities in May and the UAW's strike will continue to be reviewed by the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB).

"While we are relieved this strike is over, we continue to seek clarity that our no-strike clauses are enforceable and that we can rely on our contracts to provide labor peace through the term of our agreements, supporting UC's ability to provide critical academic and research services to our community," said Missy Matella, associate vice president of Systemwide Employee and Labor Relations.

Note that the next court hearing is a long way off: November 8th. And its not clear that PERB is in any rush to make decisions - which themselves can be appealed. So there is time for everyone to step back, take a deep breath, and decide whether what we have called "legalism"

in the past - reliance on courts and PERB to resolve issues - is the best way to conduct a relationship.

We'll say more about all of this in subsequent posts. But UC could begin asking itself what would actually be accomplished even if PERB were ultimately to provide favorable rulings for UC's position and, even if months from now, there is a court decision in UC's favor, none of which is guaranteed. UAW needs to think about the difference between organizing a union and managing the resulting organization thereafter. While it's challenging to run a democratic entity with lots of voices, too many instances of folks going off script and taking actions suggest that there are problems in managing the organization that haven't yet been addressed. Both sides need to think about what the landscape looks like from the other side. Taking that perspective may be the toughest - but most necessary - challenge to face.

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*https://x.com/uc_newsroom/status/1806388180389621867; https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/uaw-strike-formally-ends-breach-contract-case-will-continue-superior-court.

**https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/06/ucs-new-approach-to-labor-relations.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 7:28 AM No comments:   

Labels: strikes, UC-Santa Cruz

Best not to say it



Many a campus administrator has undoubtedly had the same thought as did Harvard's Dean of Social Sciences, Lawrence Bobo, a former UCLA faculty member (1993-97). But most are able to resist saying it. Read on:

From Inside Higher Ed: [excerpt]

On June 15, Lawrence D. Bobo, dean of Harvard's Division of Social Science, called for the faculty to stop publicly airing their grievances. Writing in the Harvard Crimson student newspaper, Bobo decried "the appallingly rough manner in which prominent affiliates, including one former university president, publicly denounced Harvard's students and present leadership." He then posed two questions and answered them himself. "Is it outside the bounds of acceptable professional conduct for a faculty member to excoriate university leadership, faculty, staff or students with the intent to arouse external intervention into university business? And does the broad publication of such

views cross a line into sanctionable violations of professional conduct?" Bobo asked. "Yes it is and yes it does."

Bobo further wrote that "as the events of the past year evidence, sharply critical speech from faculty, prominent ones especially, can attract outside attention that directly impedes the university's function. A faculty member's right to free speech does not amount to a blank check to engage in behaviors that plainly incite external actors—be it the media, alumni, donors, federal agencies, or the government—to intervene in Harvard's affairs." His call for faculty members to shut up in public immediately backfired. Instead of stifling faculty criticism, Bobo ended up attracting more denunciations of both himself and Harvard, alongside a torrent of articles published in one of those "external actors"—the media—excoriating him and, sometimes, the institution as well...

But this didn't end up being only a conservative pile-on. The Crimson and The Boston Globe wrote news articles on the backlash, and on June 19, the leaders of Harvard's own Council on Academic Freedom, a faculty group that formed in March 2023, denounced Bobo's op-ed in another piece in the Crimson. The leaders said it was "an unprecedented repudiation of the principle of academic freedom"...

In response to Inside Higher Ed's requests for an interview or to answer written questions, Bobo initially emailed the same statement he sent the Crimson. It said, "The Crimson op-ed expresses my personal views as a member of the faculty, seeking to put important questions before the wider Harvard community." On Tuesday, he provided Inside Higher Ed, through a spokesman, a slightly longer statement saying his op-ed "was not intended as a policy statement for the Division [of Social Science] or the Faculty of Arts and Sciences." ...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/faculty-issues/academic-freedom/2024/06/26/dean-roasted-call-silence-harvards-faculty-critics.

We recently quoted former Governor Jerry Brown saying that not every human problem needed a law. The analogy here is that not every thought that comes to mind needs an op ed, particularly if you are a university administrator.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:00 AM No comments:

Labels: academic freedom, Harvard, UCLA

Thursday, June 27, 2024

(Suspended) Strike News

The student-worker strike that was suspended by a court decision remains in limbo. According to the item below from the Santa Cruz Lookout, there will be some kind of hearing today (Thursday, June 27). It appears also that the local union in Santa Cruz made an *ad hoc* offer to UC-Santa Cruz to finish grading in exchange for amnesty for protesters arrested at an encampment:



With thousands of grades left unfinished for the spring quarter at UC Santa Cruz, recently striking graduate student workers have offered to finish grading them – in exchange for amnesty for the more than 100 people arrested at the UCSC Gaza solidarity encampment last month.

The grad student workers at UCSC and six other University of California campuses had walked off the job between May 20 and June 7, in support of pro-Palestine protesters and opposing the arrests at encampments at several campuses. However, the Orange County Superior Court granted the UC's request for a temporary restraining order against the union on June 7 effectively immediately, and they returned to work. The return meant that workers had much grading of their undergraduate students to do. As they approached the June 18 grading deadline, about 5,000 grades needed were unfinished, according to the United Auto Workers (UAW) 4811 unit chair at UCSC, Rebecca Gross.

Now, the union, as it announced on Instagram, has made an offer to UCSC administrators to have union members finish the grading in exchange for UC administrators granting the arrested protesters amnesty. Such an amnesty would apply to more than 100 people that police arrested at the UCSC encampment on May 30 and 31.

Gross said the union has given administrators until Wednesday, June 26, to respond...

Campus spokesperson Abby Butler didn't directly respond as to whether or not UCSC administrators were considering the offer. She said via email, "UC Santa Cruz does not negotiate with our local UAW – all negotiations are systemwide." As for the request for amnesty, she said university members must go through the "applicable review process. Amnesty for students, faculty and staff is not in alignment with the UC guidelines for determining disciplinary actions."

UAW 4811 and the UC are scheduled for a hearing on Thursday on the lawsuit that UC had filed against the union for breach of contract.

Full story at https://lookout.co/uc-santa-cruz-graduate-student-workers-strike-finish-grading-in-exchange-for-amnesty-ucsc-graduate-student-workers-make-the-campus-an-offer/.

It is unclear whether the local union at Santa Cruz made the offer in consultation with systemwide union leadership. A take-it-or-leave-it offer/demand for amnesty might be seen as supporting UC's ULP and lawsuit against the union which is based on the allegation that the strike was "political" in nature. We'll have to see what comes out of the court hearing and PERB.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:00 AM No comments:   

Labels: strikes, UC, UC-Santa Cruz

Wednesday, June 26, 2024

What state are we in? - Part 2



As noted in a recent post, the governor is required by the state constitution to give a State of the State address. Usually, it occurs relatively early in the calendar year. This time, it somehow was deferred until yesterday. But it did finally happen.

If you were looking for some insight into state higher ed policy, you got a brief reference to increased enrollment in higher ed and UC and a hat tip to UCLA's new research facility to be developed at the old Westside Pavilion.**

Most of the talk was general California boosterism, attacks on national Republicans, and favorable contrasts with "red" states.

As blog readers will know, we like to preserve things that might otherwise disappear. You can see the address at:

https://ia600408.us.archive.org/27/items/newsom-4-3-24-snow-survey/Governor%20Newsom%20Delivers%202024%20State%20of%20the%20State%20Address.mp4.

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*Minute 19:39 at the link above.

**Minute 23:25 at the link provided above.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:  

Labels: admissions, governor, politics, UC, UCLA

Does UCLA Have a Plan?



In response to a particular workplace incident, California enacted a law last September which goes into effect July 1 requiring most employers to have a plan in place to prevent or deal with workplace violence events. There appear to be separate regulations applicable to the hospital, but it appears that the rest of UCLA is covered by the new law. There are supposed to be training programs for employees as part of the legislation. From the LA Business Journal:

...Under SB 553, nearly every employer in the state is required to draw up a detailed plan to prevent workplace violence incidents and implement a system to respond to any such incidents that do occur. The law exempts major health care establishments that have had to comply with a similar law on the books for several decades; it also exempts law enforcement and prison agencies. Employers who never have 10 or more employees on their premises are also exempt.

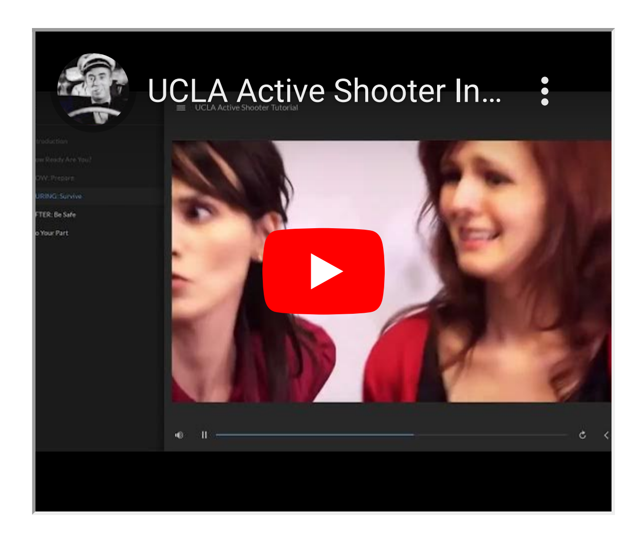
Besides the plans, the law also requires annual training sessions for all employees on the steps they need to take to reduce the risk of – or respond to – workplace violence incidents. Failure to have a plan in place by July 1 subjects the employer to fines from state regulators when they go out to inspect workplaces for health and safety violations.

But the details about what is supposed to go into these plans are vague – in part because it depends on input from employees. The same goes for the training sessions...

Full story at https://labusinessjournal.com/featured/employers-scramble-to-meet-state-deadline-for-violence-prevention-plan/.

Yours truly looked at SB 553 and found no indication that public employers such as UCLA (or the other UC campuses) were exempt.*

UCLA *does* have an online training program for active shooter incidents. See below:



Or direct to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WrbqmzCZS_A.

However, the new requirement refers to workplace violence more generally, not necessarily a shooting event such as depicted in the training video above. We are getting close to July 1, and it's not clear how the new requirements will be met.

Also unclear is how the new law applies in the event of protests and confrontations on campus that produce incidents of violence. The entire UCLA campus is a place of employment, a workplace. Whatever plans the UCLA administration has for dealing which such events have not been incorporated into training programs for employees nor have they been made public.

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*https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240SB553.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:00 AM No comments:

Labels: health care, legislature, UCLA

Tuesday, June 25, 2024

This is not OK

If yours truly were chancellor at UC-SF. he would not be happy about the item below - and not just because it is bad PR.

In San Francisco, Doctors Feud Over ‘Do No Harm’ When It Comes to War Protests

Doctors at the University of California, San Francisco, say that the workplace they once loved has been fractured by the Israel-Hamas war.

By Heather Knight, June 24, 2024, NY Times



It looked like any other pro-Palestinian encampment at a college campus in the United States. The tents, the flags, the banners calling for a cease-fire in the Israel-Hamas war. But this was at the University of California, San Francisco, one of the nation's pre-eminent medical schools and teaching hospitals. The protesters were medical students and doctors. And the chants of "intifada, intifada, long live intifada!" could be heard by patients in their hospital rooms at the U.C.S.F. Medical Center.

The Israel-Hamas war has frayed social ties around the world, undermining family gatherings and school classrooms. But rarely has it fractured a medical community the way it has at U.C.S.F., where a staff known for celebrating diversity has fallen into an atmosphere of backbiting and distrust. The university and the medical center are uniquely intertwined, both overseen by the same administration and thought of locally as one premier institution. Unlike other University of California campuses, U.C.S.F. does not have undergraduates and focuses only on health sciences. And for decades, it has built a national reputation for caring for a broad array of patients in the city, from those addicted to fentanyl on the streets to tech billionaires seeking world-class services.

But many say the spirit of camaraderie and inclusion has dissipated since the Oct. 7 Hamas-led attack against Israel. Doctors there have feuded over whether it is appropriate to openly express feelings about the war within the healing confines of a hospital. In interviews, several Jewish doctors said they had taken an oath to "do no harm," and that meant keeping politics separate from the care of their patients. But some doctors said they interpreted "do no harm" in a different way, feeling a moral obligation to speak out against the killing of doctors and patients in Gaza where Israeli strikes have struck hospitals. And they said that as a medical community, it was important for U.C.S.F. to take a stand against the war and call for a cease-fire.

Over the past several months, doctors, medical students and patients have filed hundreds of complaints with the university administration. Some have alleged instances of antisemitism on campus. Others have said they were inappropriately silenced when they tried to express pro-Palestinian points of view. Jonathan Terdiman, a Jewish gastroenterologist, said the behavior that might be tolerated on an undergraduate campus — such as the "intifada" chant — hits differently at a hospital. "People are coming here for chemotherapy. They have dire illnesses," Dr. Terdiman said. "When that chant goes up and is heard in the patient care rooms, which it clearly was, it's a violation of our professional obligations as health care providers."

Some Jewish doctors said they have darted into side rooms when they have seen staunch Israel critics approaching. Others said they have tried to keep their Jewish identity a secret. Matthew Smith, a doctoral student in biophysics who is Jewish and wears a skullcap, said he has been told by a lab technician that Israel deserved what happened on Oct. 7 and by another student that "Jews control the banks."

“It kind of staggers me honestly,” said Gil Rabinovici, an Israeli neurologist who directs the Alzheimer’s disease research center at U.C.S.F. “There is a lot of intimidation going on trying to silence the Jewish voice and Zionist voices.” Jess Ghannam also said he cannot believe what U.C.S.F. has become, given its well-known history as a place of diversity. He has been at U.C.S.F. for 30 years, specializing in chronic illnesses, including post-traumatic stress disorder. His parents are Palestinian, and he joined protests at the encampment and has worn a watermelon pin, a symbol of solidarity with Palestinians.

Patients have thanked him for wearing the pin, he said, because it acknowledged their horror at the destruction in Gaza. But he said that while he has freely worn the pin, some of his colleagues have been instructed by their supervisors to remove their pins and kaffiyeh. U.C.S.F. has a dress code prohibiting political symbols in patient care settings, but Dr. Ghannam said staff members for years have worn pins supporting abortion rights, Black Lives Matter and the L.G.B.T.Q. community without repercussions. “It’s become extremely difficult and painful to walk into buildings now at U.C.S.F.,” Dr. Ghannam said. “There is a fear and a sense of intimidation.”

Some Jewish doctors said they felt the outward displays of support for Palestinians were inappropriate to wear while treating patients. They said that some Jewish patients at a fertility clinic were rebuffed when they asked that the symbols be removed. “I wouldn’t wear an Israeli flag pin in a patient encounter,” Dr. Terdiman said. “Absolutely not.”

Dr. Ghannam said that he has told some of his fellow protesters to remove signs that he felt were inappropriate, such as one at the encampment that declared “UCSF Kills Doctors,” a reference to the demonstrators’ belief that university investments were supporting the war in Gaza. But he said that he did not have a problem with the “intifada” chant, which pro-Palestinian activists say symbolizes resistance against Israel in Gaza, but many Jews consider a genocidal call against their people. "People who are screaming that they don’t feel safe are sometimes conflating feeling unsafe with feeling uncomfortable,” he said.

In December, a task force of hospital doctors focused on antiracism discussed via email whether to issue a statement calling for a cease-fire. Avromi Kanal, a hospitalist and assistant professor of medicine, responded that while he was “horrified by every innocent death,” he worried that a cease-fire would empower Hamas and encourage kidnapping for ransom. Dr. Kanal has dozens of relatives living in Israel, including one who hid from Hamas for hours at a music festival on the day of the attack and another who works in forensics and had to identify the bodies of dead children. His grandfather survived the Auschwitz concentration camp, with his forearm branded by the Nazis.

Soon after he sent the email questioning a cease-fire resolution, Dr. Kanal learned that someone had forwarded it to another U.C.S.F. doctor, Rupa Marya, who practices internal medicine and said she focuses on how history and power affect health. She criticized his email on X multiple times over several months without naming him. But later, in a Substack post, Dr. Marya did refer to him by name and called his email an “expression of anti-Arab hate” that prompted doctors of South Asian and North African descent “to say they do not feel safe in his presence.”

Dr. Kanal said that he was shocked a colleague with whom he had never spoken had blasted him so publicly. He met with university leaders multiple times, but he said they took no action. He then filed a complaint with the school's Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination, which responded that Dr. Marya's speech was protected and closed the complaint. "It's not the words of my colleague that leave me feeling unwelcome and frankly unsafe here at work," Dr. Kanal said. "It's the persistent unwillingness of my leaders to clearly denounce them and ensure my inclusion in this broad community here at U.C.S.F."

The university did respond to a different post by Dr. Marya. In January, she said on X that "the presence of Zionism in U.S. medicine should be examined as a structural impediment to health equity" as she shared another person's post about being "terrified" for "Palestinian, Arab, Muslim, South Asian and Black patients" being treated by Zionist doctors and nurses. The university, without naming Dr. Marya or quoting her post, said in a statement that the notion that Zionist doctors are a threat to their patients was both antisemitic and "a tired and familiar racist conspiracy theory." In a written response, Dr. Marya said the statement by U.C.S.F. that addressed her post was "a disingenuous attempt to silence perspectives they don't like" and that she has never felt, in her 22 years on the job, "the kind of repression" that she has since Oct. 7. She said she called out Dr. Kanal because his email was the first time she had heard "a doctor put forward an argument to continue the killing of innocent people."

"It shocked me to see this and it is a violation of a fundamental ethical cornerstone of our profession to do no harm," she wrote.

If the doctors can agree on anything, it is that the university administrators have done too little to quell tensions and address complaints. A U.C.S.F. spokeswoman, Kristen Bole, said the university and medical center are working hard to ensure a healing environment for its patients and respect the free speech rights of its employees. She said that Sam Hawgood, the chancellor who oversees both the school and hospital, has convened meetings with faculty to hear their concerns and has issued public statements denouncing intolerance several times.

She declined to address the specifics of how U.C.S.F. has addressed particular complaints. Mr. Hawgood declined a request for an interview. Rick Sheinfield, a Jewish lawyer who has seen doctors at U.C.S.F. for 30 years, said that he filed a complaint with U.C.S.F. in January over Dr. Marya's posts. He was told in April that his case was closed with no action taken. He said that he and his family have received excellent medical care there — from heart surgery to the births of his two children. He is unsure if he will remain a patient, but said he was certain of one thing: If he was starting to look for medical care in San Francisco now, he would strike U.C.S.F. from his list.

It was not so much the posts of one doctor that bothered him, he said, but what he saw as indifference from the larger community. "I don't think they would tolerate this if it were medical conspiracy theories alleging such hateful things about other groups," he said. "But they are tolerating this."

Source: https://www.nytimes.com/2024/06/24/us/israel-hamas-war-sf-doctors.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:  

Labels: diversity, health care, UC-San Francisco

Summer Subway Construction Around Wilshire



Westwood/UCLA Station Construction

Summary

Metro contractors will continue construction activities for the future Westwood/UCLA Station within UCLA Lot 36. Activities may require temporary lane closures to access the Wilshire Bl deck panels. Work includes excavation, hauling, bracing installation, lagging, station ventilation installation, and utility support.

Date: Ongoing through Summer 2024

Work Hours: Weekdays and Weekends

5am to 5pm and 5pm to 5am for Civil work

6am to 2pm, 4pm to 2am for Support of Excavation Activities

Hauling: 6:30am to 5pm

Support of Excavation and Struts Installation work

Dates: Ongoing through Summer 2024

Work Hours:

Weeknights: 9pm to 6am

Weekends: 6am to 2pm and 4 pm to 2 am, continue through 2024

Temporary Traffic Control: Intermittent closures

Phase 1- **Weeknights**

- The Westwood southbound lane and right turn pocket restricted between Lindbrook Dr and Wilshire Bl.
- Two westbound Wilshire Bl lanes will be restricted between Glendon Av and Gayley Av
- The west leg crosswalk on Wilshire Bl and Westwood Bl will be restricted.
- One northbound lane on Gayley Av will be restricted from Wilshire Bl to Lindbrook Av.
- The north leg crosswalk at Wilshire Bl and Gayley Av will be restricted.
- The eastbound left turn pockets between at the intersection of Gayley Av and Wilshire Bl will be restricted.

Phase 2- **Weekends- 6am to 2pm and 2pm to 10pm, Friday to Monday continuously and Sundays**

- The Westwood southbound left turn pocket and one lane will be restricted between Lindbrook Dr and Wilshire Bl.
- Three westbound Wilshire Bl lanes will be restricted between Glendon Av and Veteran Av.

- A southbound Westwood Bl right turn pocket will be restricted between Lindbrook Dr and Wilshire Bl.
- A southbound Gayley Av right turn pocket will be restricted between Lindbrook Dr and Wilshire Bl.

Traffic Control: 9pm to 6am

- Wilshire Bl will have intermittent lane reductions in both directions between Glendon Av and Veteran Av.
- Left turns for Wilshire Bl may be closed at different times at Gayley Av, Westwood Bl, and Glendon Av.
- Some intermittent crosswalk closures may be implemented. Three crosswalks will be open at each intersection at all times.
- Gayley Av may have lane reductions between Lindbrook Dr and Ashton Av.
- Westwood Bl may have lane reductions between Lindbrook Dr and Ashton Av.
- Glendon Av may have lane reductions between Lindbrook Dr and Wilshire Bl.
- Trucks will continue to use the driveways on Veteran Av and Wilshire Bl. Staging of trucks will occur inside the yard. The right turn pocket at Gayley Av and Wilshire Bl will be restricted, as well as the lane closest to the curb along Wilshire Bl between Gayley Av and Veteran Av. Hauling is expected between 9am and 3:30pm ongoing through November 2023.
- Some intermittent sidewalk closures may be implemented in the work zones. The sidewalks on the north side and south side of Wilshire Bl will not be closed at the same time.

Noteworthy

- All work has received necessary permits and approvals.



- Access for pedestrians will be maintained outside of construction zones.
- Access for the Fire Department and emergency responders will be maintained.
- Parking restrictions will be implemented in the immediate area of the work zone.
- Construction is dynamic and schedules are subject to change.
- 24/7 Hotline: 213-922-6934

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Construction of the Pedestrian Bridge and North Plaza for the Westwood/VA Hospital Station

Summary

Metro contractors will demolish a mural wall and begin working on the north plaza, new mural, and pedestrian bridge construction for the Westwood/VA Hospital Station. There is some anticipated noise associated with the work from excavation, saw-cutting, jackhammering, piling driving, hauling off of materials, and other equipment and techniques that will be used during the construction of these station elements. The work for the pedestrian bridge will begin in the fall and Winter of 2024. The work for this area is anticipated to take approximately one-and-a-half (1.5) years.

The temporary traffic control that will be implemented will impact the eastbound and westbound Wilshire Bl on-ramps into and out of the VA Campus. In addition, the bus stops on Wilshire Bl will be temporarily relocated for the construction period for this activity. Please refer to the detour signs for impacted routes entering and leaving the VA Hospital.

The work requires lane reductions throughout the construction zone along Wilshire Bl and Federal Av/San Vicente Bl. Two temporary traffic control plans will be implemented to minimize traffic congestion and impacts on the local communities. Street parking may be impacted. Notices will be posted and updated online.



Dates: June 24, 2024, to Fall 2025

Work Hours:

Monday to Sunday, 7am to 5pm, Daytime, and 9pm to 6am, Nighttime

Temporary Traffic Control

- The Wilshire Bl on- and off-ramp lanes for eastbound and westbound traffic will be restricted. The detour will be implemented to maintain accessibility to the VA Hospital. The restrictions will occur during the day or night, depending on the traffic control implemented.
- The Bonsall Av off-ramps for eastbound traffic out of the hospital will be impacted during Stage 2 of the temporary traffic control. There will also be left and right turn restrictions at the intersection of Bonsall Av and Wilshire Bl for vehicles using the off-ramp out of the campus. VA Hospital egress will be detoured from Dowlen Dr. to Sawtelle Bl, Santa Monica Bl, Sepulveda Bl, and Wilshire Bl.
- Bus stops along Wilshire Bl will be relocated during this work. Please follow bus agency updates for relocation.
- Crosswalks may be impacted during the work. Please follow the traffic signs.

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LADWP Waterline Installation for New Westwood/VA Hospital Station

Summary

Metro contractors will install a new waterline at the Westwood/VA Hospital Station for use during construction and future use as a water service line for the VA Station. There is some anticipated noise associated with the work from saw-cutting, jack hammering and other equipment that will be used. The work to install the new waterline will continue for approximately two years. The

current temporary traffic control being implemented are Stages 4, 11-12, 13, 14. The upcoming work activities for Stages 1, 2, and 3 are tentatively scheduled to start on June 24, 2024, and will affect the off and on ramps into the South VA Medical Center Campus and intersection with Bonsall Ave. Please refer to the detour signs for impacted routes entering and leaving VA Hospital.

The work requires lane reductions throughout the construction zone along Wilshire Bl and Federal Av/San Vicente Bl. Multiple traffic control plans will be implemented to minimize traffic congestion and impacts on the local communities. All driveways will be maintained open unless previously notified. Street parking may be impacted. Please follow the traffic signage and street parking restrictions posted. Notices will be posted and updated online as dates and traffic control stages are confirmed.

Dates: Ongoing through November 2025

Work Hours: Work hours vary depending on the traffic control stage.

Monday to Sunday, 7pm to 6am, and 11pm to 6am, Nighttime

Monday to Sunday, 9am to 3:30pm, Daytime

Temporary Traffic Control- Stage 4 implementation continues through July 5, 2024, for the installation of waterline pipes, from 9am to 3:30pm.

- **The off-ramp into the South VA Campus will be closed to eastbound Wilshire Bl traffic.**
- **The west leg crosswalk will be closed on Bonsall Av. Please follow the traffic signs.**
- **Eastbound traffic along Wilshire Bl must access the South VA Campus from Sepulveda, Ohio Av, Sawtelle Av, and Dowlen Dr.**

Temporary Traffic Controls- Stage 3- 7pm to 6am, will be implemented beginning with pothole investigations and continue with water pipe installation. The work is scheduled from June 24through July 5, 2024. It

will close off the Wilshire eastbound off-ramp between Wilshire Bl and Bonsall Av. Southbound Bonsall Av traffic will be restricted but maintained accessible with flaggers.

Temporary Traffic Controls: Stages 12, will be implemented from 11pm to 6am, will be implemented from June 1 through June 28, for pothole activities and the installation of waterline pipes.

- The work will impact eastbound Wilshire Bl traffic lanes with reductions from Barrington Av to the east of Federal Av/San Vicente Bl.
- A bus stop along Wilshire Bl will need to be relocated from the SE corner of Federal Av and Wilshire Bl.
- Restrictions at the intersection of Federal Av/ San Vicente Av and Wilshire Bl for left turns and through traffic will be implemented. Vehicles seeking to continue eastbound on Wilshire Bl will be detoured to Santa Monica Bl to Sepulveda Bl, and then onto Wilshire Bl.

Temporary Traffic Controls: Stages 13, will be implemented from 11pm to 6am, will be implemented from June 17 tthrough June 28, 2024.

- Eastbound Wilshire Bl lanes will be restricted from Granville Av to San Vicente Bl/ Federal Bl.
- A left turn pocket will be restricted for southbound traffic at the intersection of San Vicente Bl and Wilshire Bl.
- Northbound Federal Av traffic will be restricted to left hand only at Wilshire Bl.
- Bus stops along Wilshire Bl will need to be relocated from the SE corner of Federal Av and Wilshire Bl and on Barrington Av and Wilshire Bl.
- Parking restrictions will be implemented on the east side of Federal Av.

- **Temporary Traffic Controls: Stages 14, will be implemented from 11pm to 6am, will be implemented from July 1 through July 5, 2024.**
- **Eastbound Wilshire Bl lanes will be restricted from Granville Av to San Vicente Bl/ Federal Bl.**
- **Northbound Federal Av traffic will be restricted to right turns only at Wilshire Bl.**
- **Bus stops along Wilshire Bl will need to be relocated from the SE corner of Federal Av and Wilshire Bl and on Barrington Av and Wilshire Bl.**
- **Parking restrictions will be implemented on the east side of Federal Av.**
- **A left turn pocket will be restricted at the intersection of San Vicente Bl and Wilshire Bl.**

Traffic Controls: The below details are a summary of impacts during the total scope of work.

Wilshire Bl

- Wilshire Bl lanes will be reduced for eastbound traffic from Granville Av to the on-ramp into the South VA Campus. Some restrictions on westbound traffic along Wilshire Bl from Federal Av/San Vicente Bl will be necessary.
- Restrictions will be implemented in the west corner of Stoner Av/Wilshire Bl. Left-turn pockets will be restricted for westbound Wilshire Bl traffic at Stoner Av.
- Bus stops will be relocated along Wilshire Bl between Federal Av and Stoner Av.
- Parking will be restricted on the south side of Wilshire Bl between Granville Av and Federal Av.

Bonsall Av



- The eastbound Wilshire Bl on- and off-ramp will be closed into and out of the south VA Hospital Campus. The detour will be implemented to maintain accessibility to the VA Hospital. The restrictions will occur during the day or night, depending on the traffic control implemented.
- The Bonsall Av intersection at the Wilshire Bl on- and off-ramps will allow for one-lane access for north and southbound traffic with flaggers. This work will be completed at night to minimize traffic impacts. The detour will be available during the work activities.
- Access to and from the VA Hospital will be detoured during work hours. Detour along S Sepulveda Bl and Ohio Av to Sawtelle Bl, then Dowlen Dr.
- VA Hospital egress will be detoured to Sawtelle Bl, Santa Monica Bl, Sepulveda Bl, and Wilshire Bl
- Bus stops will be relocated during this work. Please follow bus agency updates for relocation.
- The crosswalks may be impacted during the work. Please follow the traffic signs.

Federal Av/San Vicente Bl

- Left turn pocket restrictions will be implemented for eastbound traffic at Wilshire Bl and San Vicente Bl.
- Northbound Federal Av restrictions will be implemented from Texas Av to Wilshire Bl. There will also be restrictions to right- and left-hand turns during the work. Please use the detour signs.
- Parking will be restricted on the eastern side of Federal Av along the VA property from Wilshire Bl to Texas Av.
- Northbound Federal Av traffic will be detoured to Ohio Av onto Barrington Av to proceed onto Wilshire Bl.

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Bottom line: Although some of this construction and activity takes place at night, approaching UCLA from Sunset rather than Wilshire is often a better choice. [Source for notices: Emails from LA Metro.]

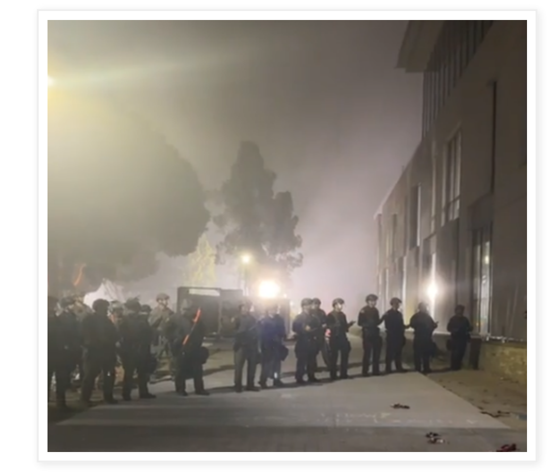
Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:00 AM No comments:

Labels: traffic, transportation, UCLA

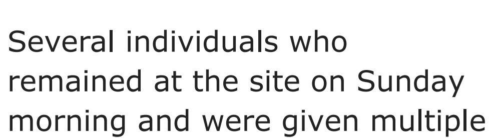
Monday, June 24, 2024

Police Remove UC-Santa Barbara Encampment

Statement from UC-Santa Barbara:



On Sunday morning, following repeated messages by the University's administration that the encampment was illegal and a violation of campus policies, police cleared the area and the campus removed a number of tents that had remained.



Several individuals who remained at the site on Sunday morning and were given multiple warnings to leave the area before and during the clearing of the tents.

While most of the individuals complied with the warnings, five individuals declined to disperse and were taken into police custody. Once the tents were removed, the University resumed normal operations.

We do not have any additional information to share at this time.

UC Santa Barbara

Source: KEYT, https://keyt.com/news/santa-barbara-s-county/2024/06/23/officers-remove-pro-palestinian-encampment-from-uc-santa-barbara-campus/.



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From the LA Times:

..."Since May, the number of tents, banners, and signs increased. The walls of the library and bathrooms near the tents were defaced by vandalism," [Chancellor Henry] Yang said. "Our appeals to respect the rights of the broader community and to remove signs that many in our community reported as offensive and threatening were ignored.

"While we respected the right to protest peacefully, the encampment became increasingly disruptive to students who were trying to pursue their educational goals, as well as faculty and staff who support the academic mission of the University," he continued. "Our principles of community have been strained and we need to work together to restore them in a safe and tolerant environment that protects freedom of expression and supports our common academic mission." ...

Full story at https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-06-23/officers-remove-pro-palestinian-encampment-at-uc-santa-barbara.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 7:18 AM No comments:

Labels: UC-Santa Barbara